JOIN US AT BLACKFOX SCANS FOR MORE FAST UPDATE'S

真夜中の儀典

CH 8: MY NAME IS X.

THE LANDSCAPE, WITH YOU IN IT, IS MY OWN PERSONAL WORLD HERITAGE SITE.

BLACK FOX SCANS

WHAT'RE YOU TRYING TO SAY?!

WH... WHAT GIVES?

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

!?

DO YOU TRULY THINK THAT I AM THE CULPRIT BEHIND THE MURDER OF THE KIRISHIMA FAMILY?!

WELL... YEAH, I DO.

I MEAN, YOU CONFESSED. YOU SAID YOU WERE "CURIOUS TO SEE HOW PEOPLE WOULD REACT WHEN THE PERSON THEY TRUSTED THE MOST SUDDENLY ATTACKED THEM."

SHE SUPPLIED THE MOTIVE AS WELL.

SHE TESTIFIED THAT IT WAS I WHO KILLED OUR FAMILY.

!!

IT WAS MY SISTER, AI WHO CONVEYED THAT TO THE POLICE.
!!

...THAT'S ... IF THAT'S TRUE, THEN...

WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO SAY IS THAT THE CULPRIT ISN'T YOU...

IT'S...

I LOVED MY FAMILY.

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I LOVED MY FATHER, WHO WAS ALWAYS RELAXED AND TOOK THINGS AT HIS OWN PACET

MY BROT-HER, WHO WAS EXEMP-LARY AND SERIOUS TO A FAULT:

MY MOTHER, WHO RARELY SPOKE BUT NEVER LACKED A SMILE;

AND MY SISTER..

SHE WAS A BIT OF A DREAMER AND TERRIBLY KIND.

THE THING I "FORGOT" TO DO WAS TO CONFIRM THAT.

BECAUSE THAT WOULD HAVE MADE AI A *LIAR.*

THEN WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY THAT TO THE POLICE?!

WHY NOT TELL THEM YOU LOVED YOUR FAMILY; THAT YOU'D NEVER KILL THEM?!

I CANNOT IMAGINE SUCH A KIND SISTER SPEAKING SUCH A FALSEHOOD.

...IF I HAD TO SAY, I'D SAY THAT I... I DON'T TRUST MYSELF.

EVER SINCE I WAS OLD ENOUGH TO UNDERSTAND, I'VE BEEN TOLD I WAS A "TOUCHED" CHILD.

FURTHERMORE ...

I HAVE *NO MEMORY* OF WHAT HAPPENED THE DAY OF THE INCIDENT.

I GUESS THE AURA I HAVE ABOUT ME DIFFERS FROM THAT OF NORMAL PEOPLE.

...SO WHAT WAS I TO DO, BESIDES ACCEPT IT?

ACCEPT THAT I WAS THE CULPRIT?

MY SISTER, WHOM I TRUSTED, NAMED ME THE CULPRIT.

AND I COULD NEITHER TRUST MYSELF NOR REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED.

YOU'RE NOT TALKING ABOUT...

IT'S JUST... I LEARNED, AFTER I WAS ARRESTED, THAT A CERTAIN *THING* WAS POSSIBLE.

OF COURSE, I MEAN BODY SWITCHING: THE CROSS ACT.

MEAN THAT YOU BELIEVE MY STORY?

WOULD THE FACT THAT YOU RELEASED ME

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IT WOULD MEAN YOU LOST YOUR FAMILY BECAUSE OF BODY SWITCHING, *JUST LIKE I DID.*

OH MY.

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OF COURSE NOT!!

AND THE PERSON WHO DID THE SWAP WAS YOUR SISTER.

IT'S JUST... IF EVERYTHING YOU SAID IS TRUE...

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WHICH MEANS, RIGHT NOW, MIKURIYA'S IN DANGER!!

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THE SMELL WAS MISSING.

WHAT SMELL?

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...BESIDES, THERE WAS ONE THING I COULDN'T LET GO OF.

WHEN I ENTERED YOUR BODY...

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THE SMELL OF BLOOD. IT WASN'T ON YOU.

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OF COURSE, THAT WAS A PSYCHOLOGICAL THING.

I WASHED MYSELF OVETTR AND OVER AGAIN, BUT I COULDN'T ERASE FROM MY BODY THE SMELL OF MY SISTER'S BLOOD.

MAYBE THE SMELL WAS ACTUALLY GONE SOON AFTER I STARTED BATHING...

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WHAT? WHY THE SILENT TREAT-MENT?

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?

BUT YOUR BODY SMELLED TOO SCENTLESS TO ME.

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT THE BODY OF A MAN WHO KILLED THREE PEOPLE.

THE THOUGHT MAKES ME GLAD...

THE WHOLE WORLD... NO, EVEN I THOUGHT I WAS GUILTY,

YET YOU WOULD POINT OUT THE POSSIBILITY OF MY INNOCENCE?

YOU'RE MAKING ME SICK!

IT'S NOT LIKE I REALLY BELIEVE YOU, GOT IT?!

WHAT?!

EDN: TSUNDERE + YURI =AWESOME

WAIT ISN'T THAT YAOI!?

WE'RE HERE, SO THAT'S GOOD, BUT HOW DO WE GET INSIDE?

OKAY.

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RIGHT NOW, WE'RE JUST A PAIR OF GIRLS. I WOULDN'T EXPECT US TO PUT THEM ON EDGE.

Y... YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT, SO LET'S JUST TAKE THIS NORMALLY...

HEY... THERE'S NO RESPONSE!

COULD THAT MEAN... SOMETHING'S ALREADY HAPPENED?

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THIS WAY. THE WINDOW HERE IS OPEN!

WH- WHAT WAS THAT SOUND JUST NOW?

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HUH? ANOTHER GUEST?

HEY! YOU ALL RIGHT?!

Al.....

BE AT EASE. HE IS MERELY ASLEEP.

OH, THEN I PRESUME YOU LADIES ARE ACQUAINTED WITH THIS YOUNG MAN?

3...2...1

WHAT IS IT? IS THERE SOMETHING ON MY FACE?

LISTEN. THAT BODY'S CROSS ABILITY, SILENT CONFESSION, LETS YOU READ SOMEONE'S MIND BY LOOKING INTO THEIR EYES FOR THIRTY SECONDS.

USE IT TO CONFIRM WHETHER OR NOT IT'S YOUR SISTER IN THERE.

!!?

KH!!

HUFF

HUFF

WHAT'S WRONG? WHAT'D YOU SEE?!

EDN: SORRY FOR TROLLING HERE IS THE REAL STUFF XD

WHAT'S WRONG? WHAT'D YOU SEE?!

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KH!!

HUFF

HUFF

TH...

THE POWER LEVEL IS...

ABOVE 9000!?

TH...

THERE'S TWO...

THERE'S TWO PEOPLE INSIDE AI...!

OH MY.

IT SEEMS I'VE BEEN DISCOVERED.

WOW, SO THAT'S YOUR CROSS ABILITY.

SEEING AS TO HOW YOUR ACQUAINTANCE WAS NOT IN HIS OWN BODY,

I SUSPECTED THE TWO OF YOU MIGHT BE SWAPPING AS WELL.

ENOUGH LIES. MY SISTER IS RIGHT-HANDED.

YOUR SISTER ...? WHAT A SURPRISE.

THEN INSIDE THAT BODY WOULD BE A'S BROTHER, I PRESUME?

JUST WHO ARE YOU?

KIRISHIMA AI, OF COURSE.

...SO YOU'RE THE ONE...

WHO KILLED MY FAMILY?

I DID INTEND TO DEPART THIS BODY BEFORE LONG, TRULY, BUT...

WELL, ITS CROSS ABILITY IS SO SUPERB, I KEEP FINDING MYSELF HERE.

SFX SMILE

YET THAT SUPERB CROSS ABILITY

PROVED INEFFECTIVE AGAINST THAT YOUNG MAN THERE'S. TRULY A SURPRISE.

WHAT AN INTERESTING POWER THAT BODY HAS, I MUST SAY.

YES, I DID THE DEED.

SFX SMILE

電撃マオウ 毎月27日発売
http://maoh.dengeki.com/

SFX: SMILE

WHATEVER ARE YOU SAYING? NATURALLY, THAT WAS WHAT YOUR SISTER HERSELF DESIRED.

THAT KIND GIRL? SHE WOULD NEVER WISH FOR THAT!

...WHY? WHY KILL MY FAMILY?

AND WHY, OF ALL THINGS, DID YOU USE MY SISTER'S BODY TO DO IT?!

.....

THEN THE QUESTION BECOMES, WHAT SIGNIFICANCE DID THAT HOLD?

I WOULD NOT BE SO SURE...

PLEASE, RECALL WHO IT WAS WHO TOLD YOU, SACHI, OF THE CROSS ACT. WAS IT NOT YOUR SISTER?

WOW, THAT SOUNDS INTERESTING.

IT'S A RITUAL THAT LETS YOU BECOME SOMEONE YOU'RE NOT.

SACHI-NII -SAMA, HAVE YOU HEARD OF CROSS ACTS?

ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT BACK THEN?

YES... I... I DO.

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SFX: FIDGET

HMM …

HAVE YOU EVER WANTED TO BECOME SOMEONE YOU'RE NOT?

I... I GUESS NOT. ARE YOU SAYING YOU DO, AI?

BY AND LARGE, I DIDN'T TRULY BELIEVE EXCHANGING BODIES WAS POSSIBLE UNTIL I TRIED IT FOR REAL IN THE PENITENTIARY.

...THAT'S, WELL...

THE ONLY REASON TO BECOME SOMEONE ONE IS NOT, OTHER THAN THE DESIRE TO SEEK SOME MOMENTARY PLEASURE...

IS BECAUSE ONE IS DEEPLY DISSATISFIED WITH ONE'S PRESENT SELF.

Good day to you

Good day to you

Good day to you

BESIDES, AS FAR AS I COULD SEE, MY SISTER WAS SWEET AND INTELLIGENT.

NOTHING ABOUT HER SUGGESTED ANY DEEP DISSATISFACTION.

SO PERHAPS, IF YOU HAD LISTENED TO WHAT THE GIRL HAD TO SAY, THINGS WOULD NOT HAVE TRANSPIRED AS THEY DID.

IN THAT CASE... HER DISSATISFACTION MUST HAVE STEMMED FROM HER ENVIRONMENT.

SFX: POP X2

AFTER LOOKING AT THIS,

SFX: DROP

CAN YOU STILL UTTER...

HAVE YOU EVER TAKEN A PROPER LOOK AT HER?

?.....

HER ENVIRONMENT...?

I THINK OUR FAMILY WAS RELATIVELY WELL-OFF.

AND HER SCHOOL WASN'T ONE THAT WOULD TOLERATE BULLYING.

AT THE VERY LEAST, I CAN'T PICTURE HER BEING SO DISSATISFIED THAT SHE'D WANT TO BECOME SOMEONE ELSE—

ARE YOU CERTAIN?

THE SAME WORDS?

THIS WOUND HERE I INFLICTED MYSELF DURING THE INCIDENT SO NONE WOULD THINK ME ANY-THING BUT A VICTIM...

DO YOU STILL BELIEVE SHE HAD NO CAUSE FOR DISSATIS-FACTION,

SACHI-NII -SAMA? ♥

HOWEVER, EVERY OTHER MARK ON THIS BODY HAS BEEN THERE SINCE BEFORE THAT DAY.

MONTHS HAVE PASSED SINCE THE INCIDENT, YET THE BRUISES STILL REMAIN.

WELL...

ALLOW ME TO KEEP THAT A SECRET FOR THE NONCE.

WHO WOULD DO SOME-THING THAT AWFUL?

SFX CLENCH

BUT I WILL SAY THIS: THE PERPETRATOR WAS A MEMBER OF YOUR FAMILY.

.....

HEY, YOU... JUST WHO ARE YOU?

IN A CROSS ACT, AREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO GO BACK TO YOUR OWN BODY AFTER TWO HOURS? AND HOW ARE THERE TWO PEOPLE IN THERE?!

YOU CERTAINLY ARE FLUSH WITH QUESTIONS... AND BEING CALLED "YOU" ALL THE TIME DOES NOT STRIKE MY FANCY.

...WELL THEN.

PLEASE, HENCEFORTH, CALL ME "X."

I AM ONE WHO PARTICIPATE IN CROSS ACTS, ENTERS ANOTHER'S BODY...

YOU'RE AN ASPIRA-TION-FUL-FILLING AGENT...?

THEN ACTS AS AN AGENT TO FULFILL SOME ASPIRATION THAT THE INDIVIDUAL CANNOT DO ALONE.

WHO KNOWS? I HAVEN'T THE FOGGIEST WHO IS INSIDE THERE, BUT...

IF YOU HELD SUCH AN ASPIRATION, THE POSSIBILITY MAY BE QUITE HIGH.

X... WAS IT YOU?

DID YOU KILL MY SISTER?

SFX: CLENCH TEETH

NO; THAT IS QUITE THE RATIONAL DECISION.

WHY? BECAUSE AT THE END OF THE DAY, THIS BODY IS KIRISHIMA AI'S.

WAIT!

WHAT GIVES? MOVE!!

SFX: GULP!

AS SUCH, NO MATTER HOW YOU MIGHT WOUND THIS FLESH,

IT WILL BEHOOVE YOU NAUGHT.

FOR YOUR SUSPECT IS THE ONE ON THE INSIDE.

AND YOU LADIES AND GENTLEMEN HAVE WORKED SO HARD TO REACH THIS POINT.

...BUT WITH THAT SAID, TO SIMPLY EFFECT MY ESCAPE LIKE THIS WOULD BE QUITE DROLL.

I ALWAYS MAKE SURE TO ATTEND A CERTAIN EVENING PARTY.

SO WHY DON'T I GIVE YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO CAPTURE ME?

WOULD YOU ALL BE SO KIND AS TO ATTEND AS WELL?

AND THEN...

PLEASE, FIND X.

IF YOU SO SUCCEED, I WILL TELL YOU ALL THAT I KNOW,

AND I WILL RETURN TO YOU AI-SAN'S BODY.

PERHAPS YOU LADIES AND GENTLEMEN HAVE ALREADY HEARD OF THE EVENT?

...SO WHAT'S THIS "EVENING PARTY" OF YOURS?

IT IS THE MIDNIGHT CROSS METHOD.

"THE MIDNIGHT CROSS METHOD"

SACHI— HE WROTE ABOUT THAT IN HIS LETTER!!

THE MIDNIGHT CROSS METHOD ...?!

MEANWHILE, AT THE CROSS METHOD, PARTICIPANTS ALL EXCHANGE BODIES WITH ANOTHER.

THUS, THEY MAKE MERRY WHILE FULLY BECOMING ANOTHER PERSON.

ONE COULD COMPARE THE MIDNIGHT CROSS METHOD TO A MASQUERADE BALL.

THERE, THE GUESTS HIDE THEIR FACES BEHIND MASKS THAT THEY MAY TEMPORARILY FORGET THEIR STATION AND THUS MAKE MERRY.

IN ESSENCE,

WE WILL BE PLAYING A GAME WHERE YOUR GOAL IS TO IDENTIFY ME AMONGST ALL THE GUESTS.

I TRUST YOU UNDERSTAND, THEN?

TRANSLATION: DOWOLF
REDRAWING: TOR BEL & CRIMSON THIEF
TYPESETTING: KYLE & CRIMSON THIEF

AND THERE WILL BE NO HINTS, SO...

サキヤ...

NATURALLY, I WILL BE PARTICIPATING IN A DIFFERENT BODY THAN THIS ONE.

SFX: CLICK...

YOU ARE WELCOME TO USE ALL THE WISDOM AND POWERS AT YOUR DISPOSAL

TO UNCOVER X.

"X"からの招待は、好機か、罠か――？

BLACK FOX SCANS